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ABSTRACT

This supplement to the resources and training manual Assessing Youth Success was designed as a facilitator's guide to activities for a 3-hour training. The purpose of the training is to help participants become more proficient in assessing youth success. The supplement contains five new optional activities intended to help participants explore assessment in more depth and to teach them techniques to build, develop, and critique assessment tools. Each activity includes goals, a time frame, a list of materials, and a brief background to the topic area covered in the title. The five activities are titled as follows: (1) Critiquing Assessment Scenarios: Assessment in Context; (2) Assessing Youth Success Characteristics: Building on Current Assessments; (3) Authentic Assessment Using Multiple Intelligences: Examples of Authentic Assessment; (4) Building a Rubric: Judging Performance; and (5) Standards We Agree On: Developing a Deeper Understanding of Students' Culture and Strengths Through Community. The supplement also contains a set of handouts for the training, many of which are formatted as worksheets; 15 online resources; 13 resources for further reading; and 7 references. (WFA)

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Connecting schools, families, and communities for youth success

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planning for youth success

Supplement to resource and training manual: Assessing Youth Success

July 2002

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Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

Creating Communities of Learning & Excellence

This resource and training manual is part of a series from NWREL to assist in school improvement. Publications are available in five areas:

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Supplement: Assessing Youth Success
Facilitator's Guide to Activities

(3 hours)

Goal: To become more proficient in assessing youth success

	Handouts	Time
Activity S.1: Critiquing Assessment Scenarios: Assessment in Context	S.1A–D	30 minutes
Activity S.2: Assessing Youth Success Characteristics: Building on Current Assessments	S.2A–B	30 minutes
Activity S.3: Authentic Assessment Using Multiple Intelligences: Examples of Authentic Assessment	S.3A–B	45 minutes
Activity S.4: Building a Rubric: Judging Performance	S.4A–B	60 minutes
Activity S.5: Standards We Agree On: Developing a Deeper Understanding of Students' Culture and Strengths Through Community	S.5A–B	30 minutes

The saying "What counts gets counted and what gets counted, counts" shows the importance of assessment and evaluation in defining what we, as a society, believe to be important. If we want the characteristics of success that we identify as important to be considered important by others, we should assess our youth on them and evaluate our ability to help our youth achieve them.

This section contains a set of activities that supplements "Measuring Youth Success," Topic 3 in the training and resource manual titled *Planning for Youth Success: Connecting Schools, Families, and Communities for Youth Success*. In Topic 3, characteristics of effective assessments are defined for the purpose of learning how to measure youth success characteristics. Then a process for developing an assessment using these characteristics is applied to a chosen youth success characteristic.

This supplement includes five new optional activities to explore assessment in more depth and provide techniques to build and practice skills in developing and critiquing assessment tools. The activities are designed to move participants from identifying contextual mismatches in the assessment process, to rating assessments using the scale based on effective assessment characteristics, to understanding what authentic assessment is, to building a common type of assessment that uses value judgments and benchmarks, to exploring local understanding of youth strengths and comparing that to standards-based education and assessment.

Enclosed you will find five sections that include an activity guide for the facilitator and a set of handouts. Each activity includes goals, time frame, a list of materials, and a brief background to the topic area described in the title. Most activities are set up for group participation and discussion, and represent the same participant roles found in Topic 3—students, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators.

At the end is a list of Online Resources, Resources for Further Reading, and References.

The activity sections are named using the letter "S" for "supplement," instead of numbering. Similarly, the pages are numbered S1, S2, and so on, in order to identify it as a supplement to the rest of the *Planning for Youth Success* manual. Many of the handouts are formatted as worksheets for participants to use during the training, so an easy way to prepare for the training would be to make a set of all the handouts for each participant ahead of time and pass out this packet at the beginning of training. Make sure that all participants have a copy of all handouts.

We hope the activities found in this supplement will provide you with a stimulating and useful exploration of assessment for youth success.

Activity S.1: Critiquing Assessment Scenarios

Goal: Learn how to analyze assessment strategies in context

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Handouts S.1A (Scenario 1: The Aquarium), S.1B (Scenario 2: Family Stories), S.1C (Scenario 3: The Kindergarten Screening), and S.1D (Scenario 4: The Time-on-Task Chart), chart-pack paper, markers

Background

According to the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST), assessment is the process of quantifying, describing, gathering data about, or giving feedback about performance. A broad range of assessment tools is needed to capture important learning goals and processes of all our youth.

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and his learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

Accounting for contextual factors in assessment means looking at multiple sources of information about a youth's characteristics. Parents, students, community members, family members, service providers, teachers, and administrators can provide an understanding of the child or youth and how she functions in a context outside the school. These perspectives can provide information to help guide assessment of the whole child, including knowledge, skills and abilities, strengths, and areas of need.

Instructions

Using the background information described above, lead a discussion about context and the importance of understanding a youth's learning contexts. You may want to define assessment again, talk about the importance of providing a broad range of assessment tools, and describe context as the "youths' background of learning experiences and their learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community."

Divide the large group into small groups of three to four people, preferably people who do not work together, mixing individuals' backgrounds and roles. Assign one scenario to each group—using Handout S.1A with one group, Handout S.1B with another group, and so forth—and ask them to read the handout and answer the analysis questions.

Handout S.1A

Scenario 1: The Aquarium

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

Ms. Tsosie, a teacher in rural Arizona, has prepared her third-grade students for a statewide writing assessment. Each student is expected to write a narrative story in response to a prompt. They will [illegible] drafting, revising, and editing. Throughout the year, her students write daily

Handout S.1B

Scenario 2: Family Stories

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

Ms. [illegible]'s fourth grade class is anticipating a field trip to the Wetlands Park near their Los Angeles school. In preparation, [illegible] from the park has come to their classroom for a second time. During his first visit, [illegible] animals they were likely to see on the trip. They [illegible] visit, the specialist wants

Handout S.1C

Scenario 3: The Kindergarten Screening

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

Tanya [illegible] girl six-year-old who is very curious and talkative. Her mother knows this very well; she [illegible] Tanya's many questions and listening to retold stories. In their native Russian, [illegible] In her fantasy play, Tanya often acts out [illegible] plays and enjoys

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Scenario 4: The Time-on-Task Chart

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

[illegible] has been struggling with keeping his attention on tasks at school and home long enough [illegible] have worked with him from an early age to help chunk the tasks into manage- [illegible] out of tasks currently supersedes his slowly learned how to function

Script

"We're going to read stories about different assessment scenarios. Our goal is to pay attention to the backgrounds and experiences of the children being assessed and how that affects the assessment process. We'll be acting as critics to find out if their assessments were effective. We will divide into groups, and each group will receive a different story to read and a set of questions to answer. Then each group will present the stories and answers to the large group."

Go over each analysis question by reading the questions and talking about the purpose:

1. What is the assessment used in this scenario?
   Purpose: Identify what the assessment is.

2. What skill/ability is the assessment trying to measure? Was it successful? Why?
   Purpose: Identify whether the assessment really measures the skill that it was intended to measure.

3. Does the assessment measure anything else?
   Purpose: Identify the contextual factors that influence this assessment.

4. Is there any bias involved in what the assessment measures? If so, what?
   Purpose: Identify any bias or assumptions the assessment makes.

5. Was this an effective assessment? Support your answer.
   Purpose: Based on questions 1–4, give an example of what an assessment would be for this scenario and why it would be effective.

6. What changes could you make in the scenario that would help make it successful?
   Purpose: Develop ways to make the assessment in the scenario more effective with additions or changes to the assessment already used.

The scenarios are The Aquarium, Family Stories, The Kindergarten Screening, and The Time-on-Task Chart. In these activities, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process. Ask each group to report back to the large group on their findings. Chart answers on paper.

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Activity S.2: Assessing Youth Success Characteristics: Building on Current Assessments

Goal: Critique and build on a current assessment or process

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Handouts S.2A (Assessing Youth Characteristics Worksheet) and S.2B (Effective Assessments Rating Scale Worksheet).

Background Often a chosen child and youth characteristic/skill is already assessed through the school or youth program. There may even be a system of assessing if the skill or characteristic is there, or using assigned values to judge if it is partially there or "close." As with any assessment, any tool used to assess the youth characteristic must be fair and effective for all children and youth, bringing into consideration all their backgrounds and abilities.

Instructions Refer to Handouts S.2A–B (A: Assessing Youth Characteristics Worksheet and B: Effective Assessments Rating Scale). Ask participants to work in groups of three to four and choose a success characteristic to work on. Have them walk through the questions on the Assessing Youth Success Characteristics Worksheet.

Handout S.2A

Assessing Youth Success Characteristics Worksheet

1. What is the skill or characteristic?

   _____

   _____

2. Describe the skill, specifying what you think is important about that skill. What does this skill look like when it is done well?

   _____

   _____

   _____

Handout S.2B Side 1

Effective Assessments Rating Scale Worksheet

Rate the assessment you observed using the Characteristics of Effective Assessments description on the back of this sheet, and assigning it a number as defined below:

1 = Low—it did not meet the aspects of this characteristic

2 = Few—it met very few of the aspects of this characteristic

3 = Somewhat—it met some aspects of this characteristic

4 = Most—it met most of the aspects of this characteristic

[illegible] this characteristic

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Characteristics of Effective Assessments

Effective assessments account for contextual factors (background of the youth and family; environment in which the youth is living, etc.) as well as other factors that affect learning and, therefore, affect assessment. Five characteristics of effective assessments have been developed from a synthesis of research and culturally responsive practices.

Effective assessments:

1. **Should measure what is being learned** and should give information about how effective the teaching strategy was.
   What did the assessment attempt to measure? Did it work or was it valid? Why or why not?
2. **[illegible]** to accommodate different learning styles and allow for different ways to [illegible] he or she knows.
   [illegible] with special needs?

Script

"Using the Assessing Youth Success Characteristics Worksheet, write down a description of the characteristic, how it is assessed, and who gathers this information. Then use the Effective Assessments Rating Scale Worksheet to rate the assessment on characteristics of effective assessments. The Effective Assessments Rating Scale Worksheet has two sides, with the rating scale on side one and more detailed explanations of the characteristics of effective assessments on side two.

Answer the rest of the questions on the characteristics worksheet and write what you would do differently or add to the existing assessment."

"From this worksheet we will either accept the current assessment or come up with additional activities or assessment techniques."

If participants are not able to think of new assessment tools or techniques, the other activities in this supplement may help.

Then, ask participant groups to report back to the larger group.

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Activity S.3: Authentic Assessment Using Multiple Intelligences

Goal: Learn how multiple intelligences can be used in assessment

Time: 45 minutes

Materials: Handouts S.3A (Assessment Examples Categorized by Intelligence) and S.3B (Multiple Intelligences in Assessment Worksheet), chart-pack paper, markers

Background

When we are trying to meet the criteria for effective assessments, authentic assessment most often fits the bill. Authentic assessment aims to evaluate students' abilities in "real-world" contexts. In other words, students learn how to apply their skills to authentic tasks and projects. With authentic assessment, teachers use testing strategies that do not focus entirely on recalling facts. Instead, they ask students to demonstrate skills and concepts they have learned. Authentic assessment focuses on students' analytical skills; ability to integrate what they learn; creativity; ability to work collaboratively; and written and oral expression skills. It values the learning process as much as the finished product.

Several common threads link authentic assessments:

- Students are involved in setting goals and criteria for assessment
- Students perform, create, produce, or do something
- Tasks require students to use higher-level thinking and/or problem-solving skills
- Tasks often provide measures of metacognitive skills and attitudes, collaborative skills, and intrapersonal skills, as well as the more usual intellectual products
- Assessment tasks measure meaningful instructional activities
- Tasks often are contextualized in real-world applications
- Student responses are scored according to specified criteria, known in advance, that define standards for good performance

Many teachers find that authentic assessment is most successful when students know what teachers expect. For this reason, teachers should always clearly define standards and expectations. Because authentic assessment emphasizes process and performance, it encourages students to practice critical-thinking skills and to get excited about the things they are learning. It provides parents and community members with directly observable products and understandable evidence concerning their students' performance; the quality of student work is more discernible to everyone, including the student. (From: www.teachervision.com/lesson-plans/lesson-4911.html.)

Types of authentic assessments may include:

- Performance assessments
- Open-response questions, interviews, observations
- Rubrics
- Reflective journals
- Projects
- Demonstrations

- Short investigations
- Collections of student work—portfolios
- Student self-evaluations

Knowing a child's intelligence strengths can help target learning goals and assessment. Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests that our culture and school systems that reflect our culture teach, test, reinforce, and reward primarily two kinds of intelligence: verbal/linguistic and logical/mathematical. His theory proposes that there are at least six other kinds of intelligence that are equally important. They are "languages" that most people speak, and that cut through cultural, educational, and ability differences. They include visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligence (New Horizons for Learning, 2001).

When students have the opportunity to select an assessment process that reflects their particular intellectual strengths, it encourages their participation and enthusiasm for demonstrating competence. Such assessment tasks provide opportunities for imaginative experiences that allow students to use their unique capabilities and strengths. With these assessments students of all ages can develop deeper relationships between new learning and their cultural backgrounds and values (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000).

Instructions

Discuss the authentic assessment notes above. Referring to Handout S.3A, Assessment Examples Categorized by Intelligence, come up with a list of authentic assessments for the youth characteristic you are assessing. In order to represent each intelligence area, separate into groups of pairs or triads. Make sure there are at least eight groups.

Handout S.3A

Assessment Examples Categorized by Intelligence

1. **Logical-Mathematical**
   Children who display an aptitude for numbers, reasoning, and problem solving. This is the other half of the children who typically do well in traditional classrooms where teaching is logically sequenced and students are asked to conform.

   Example of Assessment:
   Create story problems for, create a timeline for, write a computer program for, write a budget for, design and conduct and experiment to ....

...peaking, writing, reading, listening. These
...e their intelligence lends itself to

Referring to Handout S.3B, Multiple Intelligences in Assessment Worksheet, each group picks an intelligence area and takes on the task of planning at least one example of how they would assess the chosen youth characteristic within the intelligence area. Make sure the assessment process is complete and describes how it would be done, who would do it, and any time frame or cost. Each group records and writes down the assessment process on a piece of chart-pack paper.

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Multiple Intelligences in Assessment Worksheet

What is the characteristic of youth success chosen by the group?

_____

What is the intelligence area this group will be working with?

_____

Describe the assessment based on the intelligence area. How it would be done? Who would do it? What would be the time frame? What would it cost?

_____

_____

Post each assessment and report back to the group. Encourage sharing of ideas to enhance the assessment. Lead a discussion for the whole group using the last questions on Handout S.3B.

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Activity S.4: Building a Rubric

Goal: Understand and learn to design a rubric for a chosen characteristic

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: Handouts S.4A (Rubric-Building Worksheet) and S.4B (Rubric Example)

Background

Most characteristics cannot be measured simply by stating whether they are there or not. After we describe what a characteristic looks like, it may be hard to develop a measure of it that answers the question: "Are youth developing this characteristic?" This is where making a fair judgment about the quality of the characteristic comes into play. This is where we speak of evaluating the characteristic or performance.

Although the terms "assessment" and "evaluation" are often used interchangeably, they have different meanings. Assessment refers to how we know how well an individual has mastered skills or knowledge; it is the process of gathering information about a skill or knowledge. Evaluation makes a value judgment about that skill or knowledge against a fixed standard or level. In evaluation we set a level or criterion that determines how acceptable or unacceptable a given performance is. A rubric is an example of this.

A rubric is a set of scoring guidelines for evaluating student work. Rubrics provide the answer to the question: "What is going to be used to judge student work, performance, or characteristics?" They must be accompanied by models and indicators that make each level of quality concrete and understandable. The rubric is an authentic assessment tool that describes performance, and also provides criteria in evaluating student performance in areas that may be complex, subjective, and vague.

Rubrics can be created in a variety of forms and levels of complexity, but they all contain common features that:

- Focus on measuring a stated objective (performance, behavior, or quality)
- Use a range to rate performance
- Contain specific performance characteristics arranged in levels indicating the degree to which a standard has been met

The challenge of creating and using rubrics is to ensure that they are fair and valid, that they assess the essential features of performance, and that they are sufficiently clear so learners can accurately assess themselves. They need to be created, and sometimes revised, with input from students and their families to be meaningful and culturally sensitive. In fact, the act of creating rubrics is a teaching and learning activity that can be conducted with students.

The advantages of using rubrics in assessment are that they:

- Allow assessment to be more objective and consistent
- Help teachers to clarify their criteria in specific terms
- Clearly show students how their work will be evaluated and what is expected
- Promote student awareness of the criteria to use in assessing peer performance

- Provide useful feedback regarding the effectiveness of the instruction
- Provide benchmarks against which to measure and document progress

When students are involved in creating the rubric, they take more responsibility for their own learning, are empowered by being involved in the teaching/learning process, and have a clearer idea of what is expected in terms of specific performance. Stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, and community members) are given clear information about student assessment and instructional objectives. Teachers clarify their goals, expectations, and focus because students are a part of the process of assessment development.

In developing a rubric we want to answer the following questions:

- What criteria should we use to judge performance or existence of a skill or characteristic?
- Where should we look and what should we look for to make this judgment?
- What does the range in quality of performance look like? What is very poor and what is excellent?
- How should the different levels of quality be described and distinguished from one another?
- How do we determine validity, reliability, and fairness in a given score and what each score should mean?

Instructions Using Handout S.4A, Rubric-Building Worksheet, and S.4B, Rubric Example, create your own rubric for assessing student performance or characteristics. This activity is most effective if youth are a part of the rubric development themselves.

Handout S.4A

Rubric-Building Worksheet

Characteristic or performance that this rubric is designed to evaluate: _____

Step 1. Define the characteristic/performance/skill. Describe what it looks like when it is done well, and write it down. This may already have been done under Topic 3: Measuring Youth Success activity of the *Planning for Youth Success* manual. Copy this section if it has already been done.

***Example:** In Topic 3: Measuring Youth Success, tie tying is used as a performance assessment to measure the ability to tie a tie. To define the tie-tying skill, we describe what the tie looks like when it is tied well (it has a knot at the top, the ends hang down in equal length, the tie is straight not crooked, and it is tight not loose), and how long it should take a person to tie it.*

...haracteristics. From your description, write down any intermittent skills/abili... take place or be in place for the characteristic to be there or the perform...

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Rubric Example

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Stated characteristic, skill, or performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance	

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Activity S.5: Developing a Deeper Understanding of Students' Culture and Strengths Through Community

Goal: Provide a forum for community members to discuss education goals and standards

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Handouts S.5A (Standards-Based Education and Assessment: What We Know) and S.5B (What Do We Want?) chart-pack paper, markers

Instructions Here are some questions that could be explored within a school or community group, as well as throughout the project phase, Topic 5 of *Planning for Youth Success*. Post one question per sheet of chart-pack paper. Each participant reads the questions, discusses them with a group and, in a "round-robin" activity, circulates among the pieces of chart-pack paper, his or her ideas.

Script "Sometimes assessment exercises bring up deeper questions about what's important to us as a community."

Exploring questions:

- What does it mean to be well educated?
- How do children learn?
- Who is responsible for learning?
- What does quality student work look like?
- What do we want our students to learn in school?

Instructions Post the chart-pack papers on the wall, allowing all participants to view the record of each group's discussions. Discuss the commonalities. Then have each small group discuss important values in their culture or belief systems that are *not* included in these commonalities. Groups volunteer to report back to the large group.

Next, refer to Handout S.5A, Standards-Based Education and Assessment: What We Know, a statement and questions regarding the process of developing standards. As a large group, come to consensus on an answer to each of the questions.

Handout S.5A

Standards-Based Education and Assessment: What We Know

The following are recommended questions to explore regarding standards-based education and assessment. The participants in this group bring varied backgrounds, knowledge, and experience to the table, yet we are all part of helping youth to reach high standards.

The National Education Association uses the term *standards-based education* to refer to an integrated system in which key elements—policies, resources, curriculum, instruction, standards, assessment, and accountability—are coordinated and work together. The primary purpose of standards-based classroom assessment is to inform teaching and learning. Testing gives valuable information on student progress to [illegible] administrators, community members, and policymakers. By making the results visible, [illegible] a powerful incentive for change if the results do not meet standards. [illegible] countable for helping all youth reach

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"We need to find out what standards are and agree on a definition. Here are a few questions to help us find out about standards and how they are set."

Script

Finally, referring to Handout S.5B, What Do We Want?, ask small groups to answer the questions. Ask for voluntary reporting back to the large group.

Handout S.5B

What Do We Want?

1. In our community, how do we determine what we think is worth knowing? Whose role is it to provide knowledge?

2. Standards are created for all youth to meet. Curriculum depth and breadth may or may not reflect the goals of the community. In our schools' curriculum, which values echo those of our own culture? Who should determine answers to that question?

...u will influence

Explain that the answers to these questions may be good topics to be discussed within the *Planning for Youth Success* process. These answers can guide the process and inform the activities from the beginning, in defining youth success, measuring success, and mapping assets to promote youth success and, finally, could become topics for projects on promoting youth success.

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Resources

Online Resources

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Handouts
Supplement: Assessing Youth Success

S.1A: Scenario 1: The Aquarium
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Scenario 1: The Aquarium

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

Ms. Talson, a teacher in rural Arizona, has prepared her third-grade students for a statewide writing assessment. For the assessment, each student is expected to write a narrative story in response to a prompt. They will have three days to complete all stages of the writing process including prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. She has worked hard to prepare her students and has a strong writing program in which her students write daily on a wide variety of topics. Because teachers are not supposed to assist their students with the assessment, she has practiced both using prompts with her students and asking them to work without her assistance. She considers that her students are ready.

On the first day of the assessment, Ms. Talson walks around her classroom and observes that many of her students seem frustrated and confused. At the end of the prewriting period, some students have very little on their papers. She takes a look at the prompt. It reads: "Imagine that you live in a large aquarium. What kind of animal are you? Who lives there with you? Write a story about what happens one day in your aquarium."

Adapted from Kusimo, P., Ritter, M.G., Busick, K., Ferguson, C., Trumbull, E., & Solano-Flores, G. (2000). *Making assessment work for everyone: How to build on student strengths.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Handout S.1A

Analysis questions

1. What is the assessment used in this scenario?

2. What skill or ability is the assessment trying to measure? Was it successful? Why?

3. Does the assessment measure anything else?

4. Is there any bias involved in what the assessment measures? If so, what?

5. Was this an effective assessment? Support your answer.

6. What changes could you make in the scenario that would help make it successful?

Scenario 2: Family Stories

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

Mrs. Alejo's fourth-grade class is anticipating a field trip to the Wetlands Park near their Los Angeles school. In preparation, a wildlife specialist from the park has come to their classroom for a second time. During his first visit, the specialist asked the students what they know about the various animals they were likely to see on the trip. They routinely answered with stories about family-related animal experiences. On the second visit, the specialist wants to find out what the children know about animal species, characteristics, and habitats. He begins asking about certain animals, and the children volunteer answers again through stories. He lets a couple stories go by and then says, "No more stories." Mrs. Alejo knows that the specialist wants a "scientific discussion" with no extraneous commentary. But her students are largely from immigrant Latino families, and their cultures do not always stress the separation of content knowledge from social experience. So she isn't surprised when the specialist's next question is met with silence.

Adapted from Kusimo, P., Ritter, M.G., Busick, K., Ferguson, C., Trumbull, E., & Solano-Flores, G. (2000). *Making assessment work for everyone: How to build on student strengths.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd.

Handout S.1B

Analysis questions

1. What is the assessment used in this scenario?

2. What skill or ability is the assessment trying to measure? Was it successful? Why?

3. Does the assessment measure anything else?

4. Is there any bias involved in what the assessment measures? If so, what?

5. Was this an effective assessment? Support your answer.

6. What changes could you make in the scenario that would help make it successful?

Scenario 3: The Kindergarten Screening

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

Tanya is a feisty, happy little six-year-old who is very curious and talkative. Her mother knows this very well; she can hardly keep up with answering Tanya's many questions and listening to retold stories. In their native Russian language, Tanya is a fluent storyteller and is quite imaginative. In her fantasy play, Tanya often acts out her stories with dancing and movement. She seems very stimulated by music that her mother plays and enjoys herself. Tanya seems to have a natural rhythm and connection to the music. She is looking forward to her new school and hopes they will have music as well as good things to eat! At her screening for school, Tanya is very shy with the nurse practitioner, and doesn't offer very much conversation. She is still not as fluent in English as in Russian and doesn't know many songs in English. But the nurse speaks English, and the examining room is so quiet, that Tanya doesn't speak. The nurse sees a shy, nontalkative child. Although Tanya passes her health screen with flying colors, the nurse is concerned about Tanya's social skills and whether she has outlets to express herself.

Analysis questions

Handout 5.1C

1. What is the assessment used in this scenario?

2. What skill or ability is the assessment trying to measure? Was it successful? Why?

3. Does the assessment measure anything else?

4. Is there any bias involved in what the assessment measures? If so, what?

5. Was this an effective assessment? Support your answer.

6. What changes could you make in the scenario that would help make it successful?

Scenario 4: The Time-on-Task Chart

When we assess child and youth characteristics and performance, we must account for as many influences on student characteristics and learning as possible. Effective assessments that reflect actual learning and performance must be developed with a youth's context in mind. This context includes the youth's background of learning experiences and her learning environment. It also includes community and school cultural norms, and the attributes, goals, and strengths of the family and community.

- In this activity, pay careful attention to the context of the students' backgrounds and how this affects the assessment process.
- Read the scenario, then answer the questions below.

For a long time Stewart has been struggling with keeping his attention on tasks at school and home long enough to experience success. His parents have worked with him from an early age to help chunk the tasks into manageable pieces and work at finishing them. His skill at finding ways to get out of tasks currently supersedes his slowly acquired skills of managing and succeeding in his tasks. This came about naturally as he learned how to function long before he was diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder. In his new third-grade class, teachers have developed a chart to help Stewart keep his own log of how he stays on task or not on task. Stewart fills in his opinion, and the teachers fill in theirs. At the parent-teacher conference, his parents learn that Stewart has stayed on task an average of 85 percent of the time. They are ecstatic and think he is making real progress, but before they can mention this, the teacher describes how being off task 15 percent of the time is very high. Teachers are concerned that he needs much more rigorous support. The teachers see this as a negative report and apologize to the parents.

Handout S.1D

Analysis questions

1. What is the assessment used in this scenario?

2. What skill or ability is the assessment trying to measure? Was it successful? Why?

3. Does the assessment measure anything else?

4. Is there any bias involved in what the assessment measures? If so, what?

5. Was this an effective assessment? Support your answer.

6. What changes could you make in the scenario that would help make it successful?

Assessing Youth Success Characteristics Worksheet

1. What is the skill or characteristic?

2. Describe the skill, specifying what you think is important about that skill. What does this skill look like when it is done well?

3. How it is already assessed? If you don't know, stop here and brainstorm how you will find out.

4. Who will gather this information? Or who will you go to in order to find out more about how it is already assessed?

Handout S.2A Side 1

5. Use the Effective Assessments Rating Scale (Handout S.2B) to rate the assessment on characteristics of effective assessments. Based on the ratings and reasons for ratings, what changes do you recommend?

6. What is the purpose of this assessment tool, and how will it help us improve instruction?

7. What are the strengths or benefits of this assessment tool?

8. What are the weaknesses or limitations of this assessment tool?

9. What variables other than the student's knowledge and skills may have affected his or her performance?

10. What variable other the student's knowledge and skills may have affected *our perception* of the student's performance?

11. Does the assessment tool assess what it is intended to assess? In other words, does it meet *validity criteria?*

12. Does the assessment tool control for differences between assessment administrators? Are results reliable no matter who gives it? In other words, does it meet *reliability criteria?*

13. What would we do differently or add to this assessment tool?

Handout S.2A Side 2

Adapted from Fox, D. (n.d.) *Using classroom assessment data: What questions do we ask about classroom assessment?* Downey, CA: Los Angeles County Office of Education, Southern California Comprehensive Assistance Center. Retrieved May 29, 2002, from http://sccac.lacoe. edu/new/EdCalOct.htm

Effective Assessments Rating Scale Worksheet

Rate the assessment you observed using the Characteristics of Effective Assessments description on the back of this sheet, and assigning it a number as defined below:

1 = Low—it did not meet the aspects of this characteristic

2 = Few—it met very few of the aspects of this characteristic

3 = Somewhat—it met some aspects of this characteristic

4 = Most—it met most of the aspects of this characteristic

5 = All—it met all aspects of this characteristic

Name of Assessment _____

1. Measures what is taught Rating: _____

   Reasons for rating:

   _____

   _____

2. Fair and flexible Rating: _____

   Reasons for rating:

   _____

   _____

3. Accommodates cultural differences Rating: _____

   Reasons for rating:

   _____

   _____

4. Provides meaningful learning Rating: _____

   Reasons for rating:

   _____

   _____

5. Focuses on problem solving, reasoning, understanding, and creative thinking Rating: _____

   Reasons for rating:

   _____

   _____

If the rating score for any of the five areas about is a 3 or below, consider what changes could be made, based on your reasons for rating, to improve the score. Use these changes to enhance the overall assessment or develop a new assessment.

Handout S.2B Side 1

Characteristics of Effective Assessments

Effective assessments account for contextual factors (background of the youth and family, environment in which the youth is living, etc.), as well as other factors that affect learning and, therefore, affect assessment. Five characteristics of effective assessments have been developed from a synthesis of research and culturally responsive practices.

Effective assessments:

1. **Should measure what is being learned** and should give information about how effective the teaching strategy was.
   What did the assessment attempt to measure? Did it work or was it valid? Why or why not?
2. **Are fair and flexible** to accommodate different learning styles and allow for different ways to express how a child knows what he or she knows.
   Is the assessment fair to all people who are assessed? What about those with special needs?
3. **Accommodate for cultural differences** like language, environment, community, and cultural norms (such as group versus individual orientations).
   Was there any bias or were there assumptions made regarding the backgrounds of the people who are assessed?
4. **Provide opportunities to learn** that are meaningful and can be applied in real-world situations.
   Does the assessment measure skills and abilities that are meaningful and will be used by the people who are assessed?
5. **Focus on reasoning, understanding, creativity, and problem solving,** and encourage reflection.
   How did/does each person who is assessed deal with this type of assessment? Does the assessment encourage critical thinking and deeper thinking skills or rote memorization?

Handout S.2B Side 2

These characteristics may be used as a guideline to screen assessment tools and processes so that they can accommodate all learners.

Sources: Kusimo, P., Ritter, M.G., Busick, K., Ferguson, C., Trumbull, E., & Solano-Flores, G. (2000). *Making assessment work for everyone: How to build on student strengths.* San Francisco, CA: WestEd; and National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing. (1993). *Alternative assessments in practice database* [User's manual]. Los Angeles, CA: University of California, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. Retrieved July 1, 2002, from www.cse.ucla.edu/CRESST/Sample/AAIP.PDF

Assessment Examples Categorized by Intelligence

1. **Logical-Mathematical**
   Children who display an aptitude for numbers, reasoning, and problem solving. This is the other half of the children who typically do well in traditional classrooms where teaching is logically sequenced and students are asked to conform.

   Example of Assessment:
   Create story problems for, create a timeline for, write a computer program for, write a budget for, design and conduct and experiment to ....

2. **Verbal-Linguistic**
   Children who demonstrate strength in the language arts: speaking, writing, reading, listening. These students have always been successful in traditional classrooms because their intelligence lends itself to traditional teaching.

   Example of Assessment:
   Tell or write a short story to explain ..., keep a journal to illustrate .., write a poem, myth, play, or editorial about ..., create a debate to discuss ..., create an advertising campaign ....

3. **Visual-Spatial**
   Children who learn best visually and organize things spatially. They like to see what you are talking about in order to understand. They enjoy charts, graphs, maps, tables, illustrations, art, puzzles, costumes—anything eye-catching.

   Example of Assessment:
   Create a piece of art that demonstrates ..., create a poster ..., create a Web site that ..., chart a map or graph ..., design a logo or symbol to express ..., create a scale model ....

4. **Musical**
   Children who learn well through songs, patterns, rhythms, instruments, and musical expression. It is easy to overlook children with this intelligence in traditional education.

   Example of Assessment:
   Create a song that expresses ..., use music with variety of sounds to express ..., collect and present music and songs to ..., create a musical piece to ....

5. **Bodily-Kinesthetic**
   Children who experience learning best through activity: games, movement, hands-on tasks, building. These children were often labeled "overly active" in traditional classrooms where they were told to sit and be still.

   Example of Assessment:
   Perform a play or performance art to express ..., build or construct a ..., role play or simulate ..., use puppets to explore ..., create a sequence of movements or dance to ..., create a scavenger hunt ....

Handout
S.3A
Side 1

6. **Interpersonal**
   Children who are noticeably people oriented and outgoing, and do their learning cooperatively in groups or with a partner. These children may have typically been identified as "talkative" or "too concerned about being social" in a traditional setting.

   Example of Assessment:
   Participate in or develop a service project that will ..., offer multiple perspectives of ..., contribute to resolving a local problem by ..., teach a group to use what you've learned to change or influence ..., conduct a forum or discussion to ....

7. **Intrapersonal**
   Children who are especially in touch with their own feelings, values, and ideas. They may tend to be more reserved, but they are actually quite intuitive about what they learn and how it relates to themselves.

   Example of Assessment:
   Create a personal philosophy about ..., discern what is essential in ...., explain your intuitive hunches about ..., explain your emotions about ..., explain your assumptions in a critical incident ....

8. **Naturalist**
   Children who love the outdoors, animals, and field trips. More than this, however, these students love to pick up on subtle differences in meanings. The traditional classroom has not been accommodating to these children.

   Example of Assessment:
   Observe and describe ..., discover and describe the patterns in ..., use a field trip or some sort of experiential process to analyze ..., relate and describe the interdependence of ..., create a typology for ....

Handout 5.3A Side 2

Multiple Intelligences in Assessment Worksheet

What is the characteristic of youth success chosen by the group?

_____

What is the intelligence area this group will be working with?

_____

Describe the assessment based on the intelligence area. How would it be done? Who would do it? What would the time frame be? What would it cost?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Does this assessment meet the criteria for effective assessments?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Handout
5.3B

As a large group, answer the following questions: Can any of the assessments reported be combined to accommodate multiple intelligences? How?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Rubric-Building Worksheet

Characteristic or performance that this rubric is designed to evaluate: _____

Step 1. Define the characteristic/performance/skill. Describe what it looks like when it is done well, and write it down. This may already have been done under Topic 3: Measuring Youth Success activity of the *Planning for Youth Success* manual. Copy this section if it has already been done.

Example: In Topic 3: Measuring Youth Success, tie tying is used as a performance assessment to measure the ability to tie a tie. To define the tie-tying skill, we describe what the tie looks like when it is tied well (it has a knot at the top, the ends hang down in equal length, the tie is straight not crooked, and it is tight not loose), and how long it should take a person to tie it.

Step 2. Skills/abilities/characteristics. From your description, write down any intermittent skills/abilities/characteristics that need to take place or be in place for the characteristic to be there or the performance to be done well.

Example: In the tie-tying assessment, performance is judged by the resulting tie, but there could be skills and abilities that are assessed during the performance, such as:

- *Was it done within the 60-second time given?*
- *Was the tying skill acquired by watching a demonstration, reading a description, hearing a description, or using a mirror?*
- *Was the learner able to ask questions when needing help?*
- *Was the learner able to define the task?*

Handout
S.4A
Side 1

Step 3. Set priorities among the items in the list in Step 2. Then, ask yourself what are the most important aspects of this characteristic/performance from your list of skills, and rank them from most to least important. Eliminate those at the bottom of your list until you have determined the most important four to eight and write them down.

Example:

We choose the following from the lists above:

- *Participant can describe the task*
- *Participant can tie a tie from memory*
- *Participant does not use a mirror*
- *Tying is done in 60 seconds*
- *The ends of the tie are even*

Step 4. Write a benchmark for each characteristic in the list in Step 3. Write a benchmark description of what the characteristics would look like at different performance levels or points. Each level, beginning with "1," will describe the skill or characteristic as it gets closer to looking very well done. The number of levels or points depends on the intermittent skills or steps involved in developing the skill or characteristic and how progress toward the characteristic is defined. In the rubric example below, there is a four-level or four-point rubric scale: (1) beginning; (2) developing; (3) accomplished; and (4) exemplary or done at the highest level. The skill or characteristic is written in the upper lefthand box. Intermittent skills or steps are written down the left side. For each of these, there is a written description of what it looks like at four different progress points or levels.

These benchmark descriptions or progress points can be developed in two ways. One way is to write down what a superb example for each skill/ability/characteristic would look like in the exemplary column, then write what a slightly less well-done example would look like in the accomplished column to the left, and so on until you have each cell of the matrix filled.

Another way is to start from the beginning and describe what the characteristic's dimension is like when there are initial signs of it, then move on to developing, accomplished, and exemplary examples. Either way, you may want to start with describing a three-point or three-level scale and then add a level as needed.

Describe each level succinctly and clearly

	Beginning 1	**Developing 2**	**Accomplished 3**	**Exemplary 4**	**Score**
Stated objective or performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance	
1					
2					

Handout 5.4A Side 2

Step 5. Rate the rubric on the Effective Assessments Rating Scale and record any changes. Rate the rubric on the Effective Assessments Rating Scale. As with all assessment tools, a rubric that has been developed for a specific learning goal, performance, characteristic, or skill, should be screened for fairness, clarity, reliability, and validity and whether learners can used them to self-assess.

Rubric Example

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Stated characteristic, skill, or performance **Tying a tie**	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting a beginning level of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting development and movement toward mastery of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting mastery of performance	Description of identifiable performance characteristics reflecting the highest level of performance	
1. Participant can describe the task	Participant cannot describe the task	Participant describes part of the task	Participant describes the task	Participant teaches others the task	
2. Participant can tie a tie from memory	Participant doesn't tie the tie	Participant ties the ties with one or two suggestions	Participant ties a tie from memory		
3. Participant does not use a mirror	Participant uses a mirror for all of it	Participant glances at mirror for part of it	Participant does not use a mirror		
4. Tying is done in 60 seconds	Tying is done in more than four minutes	Tying is done in two to three minutes	Tying is done in 60 seconds		
5. The ends of the tie are even	The back end of the tie is longer than front	The front end of the tie is longer than the back	The tie has even ends		

Handout 5.4B

Source: Pickett, N., & Dodge, B. (2001). *Rubrics for web lessons.* San Diego, CA: San Diego State University, Department of Educational Technology. Retrieved July 1, 2002, from http://edweb.sdsu.edu/webquest/rubrics/weblessons.htm

Standards-Based Education and Assessment: What We Know

The following are recommended questions to explore regarding standards-based education and assessment. The participants in this group bring varied backgrounds, knowledge, and experience to the table, yet we are all part of helping youth to reach high standards.

The National Education Association uses the term ***standards-based education*** to refer to an integrated system in which key elements—policies, resources, curriculum, instruction, standards, assessment, and accountability—are coordinated and work together. The primary purpose of standards-based classroom assessment is to inform teaching and learning. Testing gives valuable information on student progress to parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and policymakers. By making the results visible, each of these stakeholders is given a powerful incentive for change if the results do not meet standards. Without those results, schools and districts could not be held accountable for helping all youth reach high standards.

- How are standards chosen for our youth? What is the process? What is the difference between our national, state, and local standards?

- National, state, and local standards are important resources for teachers and districts, but which standards are the focus for student learning? Can any one student achieve the complete set of standards?

Handout S.5A

- Does the local district adopt state standards, adapt standards from national professional organizations, or create new locally specific standards using other documents as resources?

- Are the standards presented in a form that teachers can use? How are the standards used in classrooms?

What Do We Want?

1. In our community, how do we determine what we think is worth knowing? Whose role is it to provide knowledge?

2. Standards are created for all youth to meet. Curriculum depth and breadth may or may not reflect the goals of the community. In our schools' curriculum, which values echo those of our own culture? Who should determine answers to that question?

3. Assessment informs curriculum. If you test areas that are critical to student success, you will influence curriculum in those areas. A good assessment or test is aligned with the curriculum so that schools know whether children are actually learning the material that their states or districts have decided a child should know. In our community, whose role is it to assess progress? By what measure? Who gets to choose the measure?

Handout 5.5B

4. The use of testing results should be carefully designed to be fair and flexible. Standardized tests designed for national comparisons between schools, without reference to a particular school's contextual factors, including culture, needs, and curriculum, are too often used unfairly to evaluate teachers and students. When academic progress is judged by a single indicator and when high stakes—such as whether a student is promoted from one grade to the next or is eligible for a diploma—are attached to that single indicator, the common effect is to narrow curriculum and reduce instruction to test "prepping."*

5. In our community, how should test results be used?

6. Looking at the answers above, what are some implications for teaching? For assessment? What can teachers, administrators, community members, parents, and students do?

* Source: National Association of State Boards of Education. (1997). *The full measure: The report of the NASBE Study Group on Statewide Assessment Systems.* Alexandria, VA: Author.

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